

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully presents Claims 1-16 for examination in the RCE filed herewith. Claims 1, 8, 10, 12 and 15 have been amended herein to more clearly define the scope of the presently claimed invention. No new claims have been submitted and no new matter has been introduced. Applicant respectfully submits that the claims and remarks presented herein overcome the Examiner's rejections in the Final Office Action dated June 18, 2004 in the parent application.

35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 7, 8 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,754,862 ("Jones") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,016,392 ("Jordan"). Claims 2, 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Jones in view of Jordan, in further view of AP ("Arrays, pointers, pointer arithmetic"). Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Jones in view of Jordan, in further view of Kathleen Fisher, et al. ("What is an Object Oriented Programming Language?", hereafter "Kathleen"). Claims 9 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Jones in view of Jordan, in further view of Danel Liang ("Java Programming"). Claims 12, 13, 15 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over TO ("Object Reference Casting") in view of AP. And finally, Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over TO in view of AP, in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,421,681 B1 ("Gartner"). Applicant respectfully traverses all these rejections.

With respect to independent Claims 1, 8 and 10, as described in the specification, in embodiments of the invention, the internal data structure of objects which are instances of a class that implements interfaces may be modified to include extra fields, where the extra fields include pointers to interface vtables for the interfaces implemented by the class. As described in the previously submitted amendment, these pointers may allow more efficient dispatch of interface functions and/or allow the efficient casting of references of an interface type into references whose type is defined by the class that implements the interface (Specification, Page 9, lines 11- 18). The Examiner does not

suggest that this limitation is taught by either Jones or Jordan, but points out that this limitation is not explicitly claimed in Claims 1, 8 and 10. Applicant respectfully submits that these independent claims have been amended to include the limitation of "an object, the object being an instance of the class, the object comprising a second pointer configured to point to the interface vtable associated with the interface, *the second pointer allowing for efficient casting of references of an interface type into references whose type is defined by the class configured to implement the interface*" (emphasis added).

Applicant respectfully submits that Jones does not teach or suggest the use of pointers in this manner. The sections the Examiner highlights in Jones merely describe typical object oriented programming elements, including functions, classes, objects and/or interfaces. There is no teaching or suggestion in these sections (or any other sections of Jones) that the elements be combined in the manner claimed. Specifically, there is no teaching or suggestion of an interface vtable comprising a first pointer configured to point to a function and/or an object that is an instance of a class, where the object comprises a second pointer configured to point to the interface vtable associated with an interface, and where the second pointer allows for efficient casting of references of an interface type into references whose type is defined by the class configured to implement the interface. The combination of Jordan with Jones also does not teach or suggest these elements of Claims 1, 8 and 10. Jones and Jordan therefore do not render independent Claims 1, 8 and 10 unpatentable. Claims 2-6 are dependant on independent Claim 1, Claim 9 is dependant on Claim 8 and Claim 11 is dependant on Claim 10. As previously described, Jones, alone or in combination with Jordan, does not render independent Claims 1, 8 and 10 unpatentable. The addition of AP, Kathleen and/or Java Programming to Jones and/or Jordan also does not teach or suggest the elements of Claims 1, 8 and/or 10, and therefore these references also do not render the dependant Claims 2-6, 9 and 11 unpatentable.

With respect to independent Claims 12 and 15, TO includes a discussion of object reference casting (TO, Page 1) while AP appears to be a discussion of how arrays are accessed in C (AP, Page 1). These references thus appear to discuss abstract programming concepts, without any suggestion that the concepts may be combined to

achieve the claimed invention. More specifically, the references, alone and/or in combination, do not teach or suggest the invention in Claims 12, 13, 15 and 16. Claims 12 and 15 are independent claims directed to a *novel* method for casting a reference to an object, according to the claimed elements. The claims are not directed at the *general* concept of casting, as discussed in TO. Indeed, the general concept of casting, as discussed in TO is also described in the Background section of the application ("A programming language or computing environment may provide an instruction to convert or cast a reference of one type to another type, e.g., a reference of a type defined by a class may be cast into a reference of a type defined by an interface that is implemented by the class." Specification, Page 3, lines 1-4).

Embodiments of the invention as claimed, however, include receiving a first reference configured to refer to an object, the first reference having a type defined by an interface, receiving a request to cast the first reference to a type defined by a class that implements the interface, and receiving a pointer, the pointer contained in the object, the pointer configured to point to a canonical base address of the object, *the pointer allowing for efficient casting of the first reference*. The Examiner concedes that TO does not teach the element of receiving a pointer, the pointer contained in the object, the pointer configured to point to a canonical base address of the object. The Examiner, however, submits that AP teaches this element. Applicant strongly disagrees. AP merely describes the use of pointers to access arrays (a sequence of objects). There is no teaching or suggestion in AP for the use of pointers in a method to cast a reference to an object. Again, Applicant reiterates that TO and AP may not be blindly combined to suggest that the concept of using pointers, as claimed, to cast a reference to an object is known. On the contrary, since there is no suggestion in TO for the use of a pointer contained in an object, where the pointer is configured to point to a canonical base address of the object, the pointer allowing for efficient casting of the first reference, and AP also does not teach this element, Applicant submits that the combination of TO and AP does not teach or suggest the claimed invention in Claims 12 and 15. Claims 13 and 16 are dependant on Claims 12 and 15 respectively. TO and AP therefore also do not render these claims unpatentable.

Finally, Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over TO in view of AP, in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,421,681 B1 ("Gartner"). Claim 14 is dependant on Claim 12. As previously discussed, TO and AP do not teach or suggest the elements of Claim 12. The addition of Gartner to TO and AP also does not teach or suggest these elements of Claim 12. Since Claim 14 is dependant on Claim 12, TO, AP and/or Gartner therefore also do not render Claim 14 unpatentable.

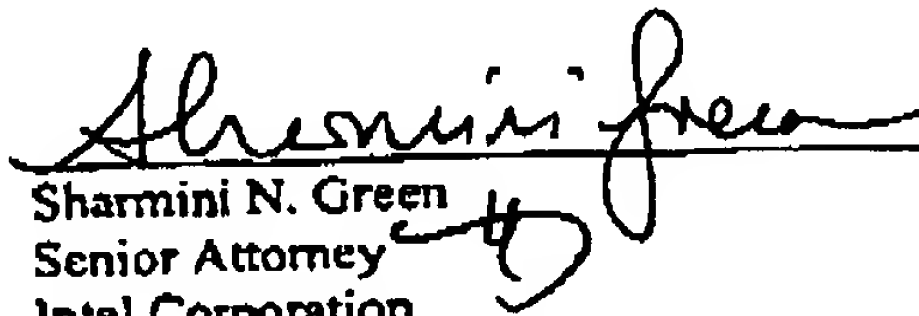
In summary, Applicant respectfully submits that none of the references cited, alone and/or in combination, render Claims 1-16 unpatentable. Applicant therefore respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejection to Claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the applicable objections and rejections have been overcome and that pending Claims 1-16 are in condition for allowance. Applicant therefore respectfully requests an early issuance of a Notice of Allowance in this case. If the Examiner has any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (310) 406-2362.

Respectfully submitted,

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